

When cool enough to handle, peel and set aside. Meanwhile, place dried chillies and hibiscus flowers in a bowl, cover with boiling water and stand until softened (10-15 minutes), then strain, reserving water. Wearing gloves, carefully remove and discard chilli seeds and membranes. Process softened chilli and hibiscus flowers, roasted onion and garlic, coriander roots and spices (except cinnamon quill) in a food processor to a purée and season to taste. Heat 1 tbsp chilli oil in a large casserole over medium heat, add paste and stir. constantly until fragrant and thick (6-7 minutes). Add tomato and cinnamon quill, reduce heat to low and simmer until thickened (15-18 minutes). Meanwhile, heat remaining chilli oil in a frying panover high heat, add nuts, bread and a pinch of salt and fry until toasted (4-6 minutes). Drain on paper towels, place in a food processor and process to a paste, adding a reserved chill-hibiscus water to loosen, then add to tomato mixture. Remove cinnamon guill, add chocolate, remaining reserved chill-hibiscus water and reserved oxtail stock and bring to the simmer over medium heat. Purée with a hand-held blender and stir in cavolo nero, lime juice and reserved oxtail.

4 For rough rice, heat a frying pan over medium-high heat, toast pepitas and sunflower seeds until golden brown (2-4 minutes) and set aside. In a saucepan, bring 3 litres of water to the boil, add rice, bring back to the boil and cook rice, stirring occasionally, until tender (25-35 minutes). Strain, transfer to a large bowl, stir in spring onion and cavolo nero and season to taste. Spoon into serving bowls, top with mole rojo, scatter with coriander and toasted sesame seeds, and serve with salsa picante and time cheeks.

Note Guajilio, habanero, mulato and chipotle chillies are available at Mexican grocers, herbies.com.au and fireworksfoods.com.au. Hibiscus flowers, also called Jamaica flowers, are available at Fireworks Foods and Fiji Market (see stockists p183).

"Have a good croque-monsieur, and the one at Muse in the Hunter is one of the best. What's their secret?"

James Glanville, Newcastle, NSW

Pork hock croque-monsieur

Prep time 15 mins, cook 21/5 hrs (plus cooling)

Makes 4 (pictured p34)

- 2 smoked pork hocks (about 800gm each)
- 2 litres (8 cups) chicken stock
- 300 ml dry white wine
 - 2 each onions, celery stalks and carrots, chopped
 - 8 thrme sprigs
 - 2 garlic cloves
 - 8 thick slices sourdough bread
- 150 gm Gruyère, finely grated Dijon béchamel
- 60 gm butter, diced
- 60 gm plain flour
- 400 ml milk, warmed
- 100 gm Dijon mustard
- 15 tsp finely grated nutmeg

Watercress salad

- 2 cups (loosely packed) watercress
- 8 cornichons, halved
- 3 golden shallots, thinly sliced on a mandolin Juice of 2 lemons
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 Rinse hocks, place in a large saucepan with stock, wine, vegetables, thyme and garlic and bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer uncovered until meat easily comes away from the bone (1%-2 hours). Set hocks aside to cool. Strain liquid into a saucepan and boil until reduced by two-thirds (10-15 minutes). Shred meat, add to reduced stock, season to taste and refrigerate.
- 2 Meanwhile, for Dijon bechamel, melt butter in a saucepan over medium heat, then gradually add flour, stirring until smooth (3-4 minutes). Gradually whisk in warmed milk and stir continuously until thickened (4-5 minutes). Remove from heat and stir in mustard and nutmeg.
- 3 Preheat over to 180C and line an over tray with baking paper. Generously spread half the bread slices with bechamel, top with pork mixture and sandwich with remaining bread. Scatter generously with Gruyère and season to taste. Place on prepared tray and bake until cheese melts (8-10 minutes), then finish under a hot grill for a golden-brown top (3-5 minutes).
- 4 For watercress salad, toss ingredients together in a bowl and serve with croque-monsieurs.

"The honeycomb dessert at Marque is magnificent.
I'd love to attempt to recreate it at home."

Sandra Pin, Potts Point, NSW

Honeycomb with cultured cream

At Marque they culture their own cream. Try our recipe on p138 or buy a good creme fraiche instead. Prep time 5 mins, cook 10 mins (plus setting)

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- 415 gm caster sugar
- 150 gm liquid glucose
- 65 gm single blossom honey (such as Malfroy's Gold; see note)
- 18 gm bicarbonate of soda
- 200 gm crème fraiche, to serve
- 1 Line a 20cm-square cake tin with baking paper. Stir sugar, glucose, honey and 75ml water in a deep saucepan over medium-high heat until dissolved, wiping down sides of pan with a wet pastry brush to prevent crystals forming. Boil until sugar syrup reaches 160C on a sugar thermometer (8-10 minutes). Remove from heat and whisk in bicarbonate of soda (mixture will foam up). Working quickly, pour mixture into prepared tin and leave to cool and set (1-2 hours).
- 2 When cool, break honeycomb into shards. Honeycomb will keep stored in an airtight container for a week. Serve honeycomb shards with creme fraiche.

Note Malfroy's Gold honey is available online at malfroysgold.com.au.

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